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ABSTRACT

Since 1976, the Tennessee Indian Council has grown from an idea into an organization staffed by 20 native Americans in 3 offices, administering $500,000 a year, and providing educational, employment, housing, health, and cultural revitalization programs for 8,500 Native American residents of Tennessee. The situation in Tennessee is a microcosm of the Indian world throughout the United States; rural communities experience poverty, lack of education, and lack of job skills, while, in addition, urban Indians face the problems of alienation, alcoholism, and difficulties with jobs and housing. Before the advent of the Council, Indian people (including a sizeable Choctaw population and several Cherokee communities) had no organized voice and virtually no recognition on the state level. The Council is now the only state wide advocate for Indians and Indian programs, standing for the rights of all Native American people, seeking to restore a measure of sovereignty, and operating on the principle of self-determination by responding to the needs of the people as they state them. With funding from CETA, VISTA, Summer Youth Program, and private grants, the Council has operated an employment program resulting in the hiring of 166 persons, 2 GED programs attended by 93 individuals, and provided counseling and referral services for 271 Native Americans. Future plans include the development of a Choctaw bilingual program and a library clearinghouse for historical and contemporary material of Indians of Tennessee and the southeast. (NEC)

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

PREFACE

Let the People Speak is the name of the monthly news letter published by the Tennessee Indian Council, Inc. We have chosen this as the title of our field analysis paper which is an actual status summary of the success, accomplishments, and failures of the Tennessee Indian Council's attempts to remediate the unmet advocacy requirements of Indian residents in Tennessee.

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The graphic designs used in the text are taken from *Sunsigns and Human Hands* by Emma K. Fundaburk and *Indians and Artifacts in the Southeast* by Bert W. Bierer. All of the designs were used in what is now Tennessee by the Indian culture which lived here from approximately 250 A.D. to 1400 A.D.

This report was researched and written by Michael White, graphics by Kim Coffroth, photos by Kim Coffroth and Orie Rice. Special thanks to Bryant Moore and Jacque Srouji. Fritz R. Niggeler, Executive Director of the Indian Council directed the preparation of this report.

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I. INTRODUCTION

History of Tennessee Indian Council, Inc.

The Tennessee Indian Council was chartered in the State of Tennessee on August 11, 1976, as a tax-exempt non-profit corporation. The Council grew out of the Tennessee Indian Center which was formed in 1975 to provide an organizational voice for the Native American residents of the state. The Board of Directors of the Tennessee Indian Council are all of Native American descent and represent the major geographic areas of the state.

The goals of the Council as stated in the Charter are as follows:

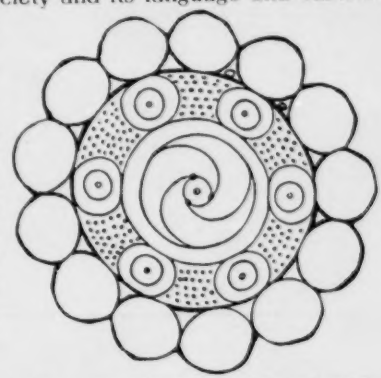
1. To raise the level of consciousness of the non-Indian population in the state of Tennessee to a fuller awareness of the past history and current status of Native Americans and other indigenous people by sponsoring, promoting and conducting seminars, institutes, education programs and public information activities.
2. To sponsor, promote and conduct programs of research on subjects related to American Indians.
3. To sponsor, promote and provide social services, financial assistance by loans, grants and other forms of assistance to American Indians who are in need thereof.
4. To locate public and private agencies which can provide health, education, welfare, employment and other services to American Indian people in the State of Tennessee; and to advise and assist Indian people in obtaining and utilizing such services.

The Council serves to represent the approximately eight thousand five hundred Native American residents of the state. There are several identifiable Indian Communities in the state; West Tennessee has a sizable Choctaw population, East Tennessee has several communities of Cherokee people, and virtually every county in the state has a few Native American families. Until the formation of the Indian Council these people had no organized voice at a state level. Before the advent of the Council the state service agencies has no awareness of the Native American population or their special problems. It is the role of the Council to stand as an advocate for all Native Americans in the state. This advocacy stance operates at all levels

of the state and federal government to assure that the government recognizes the Native American population and responds to their needs.

The Council operates strictly on the basis of self-determination. The Council does not try to tell anyone whether or not they are Native American or what their problems are. Rather, the Council serves to respond to the needs of individuals and communities as they determine them. When individuals or communities determine that they have specific needs the Council attempts to either refer them to a program or serve as the vehicle to deliver a program to meet those needs. The Council does not initiate or impose programs, rather it responds to the needs expressed by the community. In this manner the Council represents the Native American populate and serves to advocate their needs and rights at all levels of the institutional structure of the state.

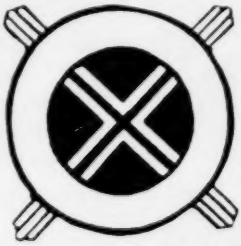
The Indian population in the state is multi-tribal and extremely scattered. There are Indians in both the urban and rural environments and most are at the bottom of the socio-economic scale. The Indian people are caught between two societies. With no reservations in the state the Indians are disconnected from their traditional society and its language and customs. Yet they are not able to integrate into the society at large. They are disconnected from their historical society and from the dominate contemporary society in which they live. They have been overlooked and ignored by the state and have survived without recognition as best they could. They are not equipped with the education or job skills necessary to integrate and are faced with severe social and health problems. The Indian simply does not fit in and has no place to go.



Because of this situation many Indian people have not identified themselves as Native Americans, it has not been in their best self interest to do so and they have been forced to respond as black, white, or other. All these factors have produced a condition of low self-esteem for Indian people in relation to white society.

The Indian peoples have no focus of identity, little means of identification with their past and limited means of acquiring the education and job skills needed to move into the mainstream. These problems are felt by every Native American in the state but before the advent of the Indian Council no one had articulated or communicated their problems. As a group they had no voice and no political or social clout. The Indian Council serves as the go between for the Native American population and the state bureaucracy. The Indian people need and deserve a chance to do more than survive at the lower edge of society. They must be provided with the opportunity to choose a better way. They must be able to do more than survive.

Upon formation of the Council in August of 1976, there were two private grants totaling six hundred dollars. This money was used to help Native American families in emergency situations and for administrative expenses. In 1977, the Council applied for CETA funds through Title I, Title III, and Title I-4%. Titles I and III provided money for jobs programs and administration. The Title III came directly from the Division of Native American Programs in Washington. The Title I came through the state as a part of the significant segments money. The Title I-4% was a special fund and was used to set up a High School Equivalency (GED) program in West Tennessee. The Titles I and III money was used to hire outreach recruiters in west, middle, and east Tennessee, and to pay salaries for the administrative staff in the main office. The outreach recruiters could use the Titles I and III funds to develop subsidized jobs at public or non-profit organizations for either a year or six months. The outreach recruiters could then hire any Native American person who could be certified by the Department of Employment Security as CETA eligible and place them in a job. The Title I-4% was used to hire teachers and bilingual aides to teach in a bilingual GED program in west Tennessee. These three contracts totaled $307,850.00.



At this point the need developed for a hard data base concerning the Native American population and the state and private services that were available to them. To gather this data an application was submitted for Title VI CETA funds for Community Ascertainment. This was awarded with a contract for $185,952.00 to hire a research staff consisting of twenty Community Service Specialists, a Coordinator, three typists, and a Finance Clerk. All Employees had to be non-Davidson County residents and had to be certified as CETA eligible by the Department of Employment Security. This brought the total CETA funds administered in fiscal year 77-78 to a total of $493,801.00.

For the current year, fiscal 78-79, the Title I and III funds have been continued. The Title I-4% has also been continued for a GED program for the Native American communities in east Tennessee. The Title VI was discontinued and Title II funds acquired to hire a service oriented staff in Middle Tennessee. In 78-79, a total of $492,095.00 in CETA funds will be administered through these CETA contracts. In both years, 77-78 and 78-79, a $6,000 grant from the Methodist Church has been administered at the discretion of the Executive Director.

In addition, the Summer Youth Program was administered in the summer of 1978, with a total of $35,245.00 used to hire twenty-two high school students. In 1979, the VISTA program began with ten volunteers and a supervisor. The Council will administer a total of $11,500.00 in salaries, allowances, and mileage for the VISTA program.

These sums, as represented on the following table, illustrate the total income to the Council.

TABLE I

TENNESSEE INDIAN COUNCIL TOTAL INCOME

Source	76-77	77-78	78-79	Total
CETA I	$ 0	$178,656	$200,000	$378,656
CETA I-4%	0	43,299	87,825	130,124
CETA II	0	0	95,270	95,270
CETA III	0	86,895	109,000	195,895
CETA VI	0	185,952	0	185,952
Methodist	0	6,000	6,000	12,000
Summer Youth	0	35,245	0	35,245
VISTA	0	0	11,500	11,500
Other	600	0	0	600
TOTAL	$600	$535,047	$509,595	$1,045,242

The CETA contracts which the Council has administered have been received through the Department of Employment Security on the state level and the Division of Native American Programs (DINAP) on the federal level. The process of applying for and receiving the contracts has been competitive, the money was not simply there for the Indians of Tennessee. The Indian Council has had to compete with other agencies to get a share of the money for Indian programs. In fact, the State Department of Employment Security and in particular the contracting section has dealt with the Council in a manner that often included deliberate attempts to block the progress and development of Indian programs. These problems stemmed from racial prejudice on the part of some individuals and were manifest in an adversary type relationship with the Council marked by lack of cooperation and communication.

After the initial approval of the first CETA proposals, the Council contacted the contracting section to begin development of the contracts. However, the contracting section failed to notify the Council of a meeting in Atlanta with DINAP to determine the amount of the contract. The Council learned of the meeting the morning it was to take place. The Executive Director rushed to Atlanta to find the state contracting representatives trying to take out the salary of the administrative personnel. They were attempting to make other drastic changes in the contract. Because of this last minute intervention, the contract was not changed.

During this time the Council staff consisted of only the Executive Director and the Financial Manager. The staff had to be hired under Title III and those funds were tied to an abortion bill in the U.S. Congress and were being

held up in Washington. At this time, the contracting section required the Executive Director prepare three CETA contracts; the Title I, Title III, and Title I-4%. Further, the Council was never provided with the narrative guidelines for any of the contracts. Thus the narratives went through a long and frustrating process of revision by trial and error. The same was true of the budgetary information with no guidelines and no assistance from the Employment Security staff. When disagrements surfaced as to certification of CETA eligibility, the contracting section threatened to withhold the funds and cancel next years contracts if the Council did not comply.

When the Title III money was cleared through Washington, it left the Council with an extremely short lead-in time to recruit, interview, and hire the staff. At this point the state made the arbitrary decision that all staff had to be of Native American descent as well as being CETA eligible. Thus it was extremely difficult to find and hire professional quality staff. This left the bulk of the professional work in the hands of the Executive Director.

When the Title VI proposal was presented it was well received on the part of the top level of the Department of Employment Security. The Council was given top level verbal assurances that it would be recommended for funding. However, during the processing of the application all the copies at the Department of Employment Security were misplaced. In fact, an employee who felt Indian programs were not needed in the state of Tennessee, stalled the application in a bottom desk drawer. Then, when the first notification of funding occurred the Council did not receive any word. When Employment Security was contacted they said they could not find any copies of the application. When new copies were submitted and the application allowed to proceed in the processing procedure it was awarded with full funding. The delay led to another problem with short lead-in time to recruit and hire the staff. The Title VI funds did not include any administrative staff and CETA eligibles had to be used in key roles. Thus the staff was largely unqualified and untrained. This was a particularly acute problem in the accounting division.

When the second fiscal year came up for funding there were more problems. The contracting section would devise new forms that required workshop orientations for proper use. These workshops were held without notifying the Council. Other communication problems continued and the Council did not receive notification about guidelines for narratives or changes in the accounting system.

The upper levels of the Department of Employment Security were extremely helpful and cooperative. They gave the Indian communities their first ray of hope about developing Indian programs. The problems developed in the contracting stage when certain individuals felt that Indian programs were not needed in Tennessee and made deliberate attempts to block their progress. The process of dealing with these people has been difficult and extremely frustrating.

Nor was this apparent harrassment limited to the Tennessee Indian Council. An attorney for Legal Services of Nashville critically advised the federally-funded Middle Tennessee Health Systems Agency that the small amount of money it had spent on an Indian Health Conference was

"atrocious" since there were not enough Native Americans in the state to justify the HSA expenditure.

In the past several months CETA funded programs have come under close nationwide scrutiny. In response to this nationwide criticism the local Tennessee news media began a so-called in-depth inquiry into the success or failure of CETA programs in Tennessee. The CETA funded Indian programs were, naturally, to be included as one of the targets of the inquiry. Mysteriously, the Indian programs were singled out of the fifteen million dollars in balance of state CETA funds for the scrutiny of the media. The scope of the balance of state inquiry was focused on and limited to the Indian programs. This inquiry was apparently intended to coincide with the beginning of the annual audit of CETA contracts.

As a result of their inquiry, there was a concerted effort to factionalize the Indian communities across the state and to polarize the Council staff. This included inducing certain staff members to reproduce documents and make available private matters unrelated to CETA or any other publically funded projects. In addition, other overt attempts were made to subterfuge and slow down the day to day Indian program activities. Attempts were made to entice staff in the satellite offices to provide embarrassing or critical personal information about the area coordinators. As a result of these unsuccessful attempts at invasion of privacy, an attorney was contacted and depositions were taken.

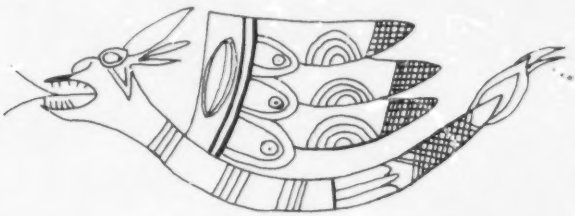
Unfortunately, this put the Indian programs in a vulnerable position with negative media coverage paralleling the audit. This left the Department of Employment Security in the role of needing to be two hundred percent co-operative with anyone who wanted information about Indian programs.

As the audit process proceded there were numerous personality clashes between the Council staff and the auditors, with some over reaction on the part of Council staff. This all produced an aura of suspicion, fear, and general uneasiness that permeated even the most simple day to day operations. Simple auditing questions were perceived with sinister overtones. It was extremely difficult to maintain morale and eke out contract requirements when much of the Executive Director's time was spent stamping out grass fires across the state. The Executive Director had to reinforce and support the statewide staff. However, there have been positive benefits derived from the preliminary audit work. This has resulted in several necessary changes in the accounting procedures and travel regulations. The Council has also retained a CPA firm to assist with accounting procedures. There has been an overall lack of communication, whether willing or unwilling, on the part of certain key Employment Security personnel which could have been avoided and prevented much of the duress. It is a tribute to the administrative staff of the Council that they have continued to operate.

Summary of Results

At present the Council is operating with twenty-four employees situated in three offices across the state. The main office is located in Nashville and houses a staff of eighteen. This includes the Executive Director, a three

person accounting staff, an outreach recruiter, three planners, two secretaries, and seven people in counseling and referral for health, nutrition, education, social and legal services. The east Tennessee office is located on the U. T. campus in Knoxville. It houses the outreach recruiter, a social services representative and a secretary. This office also serves for the GED staff including the lead instructor and two paraprofessionals. The west Tennessee office is located in a tricounty office building and houses the outreach recruiter. The staff is supplemented by ten VISTA employees who do volunteer work for the Council. There are five in east Tennessee, three in west Tennessee and two in middle Tennessee.



In August 1979, the Council will be three years old. In those three years the Council has moved from an idea in the minds of a small group of people to an organization which is administering a half a million dollars a year and providing programs on a state wide basis. And just as important is the new awareness that the state institutions have acquired concerning the Native American residents. Before the advent of the Council the Indian people had no organized voice and virtually no recognition on the state level. Because of the work of the Council the State Department of Employment Security, Education, Public Health, and Human Services all recognize that there is a distinct Native American population in the state and that they must move to recognize it and provide services.

The Council has negotiated contracts with the state and federal governments for a total of $1,038,642. This includes CETA Titles I, III, and I-4% for two fiscal years, CETA Titles VI and II for one year each, and the VISTA and Summer Youth Program. The Council has also received private grants from the Methodist Church for six thousand dollars a year for two years. This brings the total income of the Council to $1,044,642.

With this money the Council has successfully operated an employment program, two GED programs and provided counseling and referral services as well as the in-house administration and research.

The following table provides a numerical summarization of the accomplishments of the Council. It illustrates the number of people hired by the job program, VISTA, and the Summer Youth Program. It also shows the number of people who attended the GED classes and the number who have received counseling and referral. The category counseling and referral demonstrates the number of people who were provided services other than those hired under the job programs or attending classes.

TABLE II

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(September 1977-1979)

		West Tn.	Mid Tn.	East Tn.	Total
Employment	CETA I and III Work Experience	21	20	60	105
	CETA I and III Public Service Employment	5	10	5	20
	CETA I and III Classroom Training	2	2	5	9
	Summer Youth		22		22
	VISTA	3	2	5	10
	Total Hired	31	56	79	166
GED Program	Number Attending Classes	43		50	93
Counseling and Referral	Number Served	37	113	121	271
Total		111	169	250	530

As illustrated on the table a total of one hundred and sixty-six Native American people have been served through the various job programs. The CETA Title I and III funds have been used to hire one hundred and twenty-five Native American people and have provided classroom training for nine. This represents one hundred and thirty-four Indian people who had been unemployed for at least fifteen weeks and many who were chronically unemployed with little or no opportunity to develop job skills. The Summer Youth Program provided employment for twenty-two young people. The GED program has served a total of ninety-three people with fifty attending classes in east Tennessee and forty-three in west Tennessee.

Counseling and referral services have been provided to at least two hundred and seventy-one people. This refers to people who were not hired through CETA but have been provided other services including referral to private employment, emergency assistance with food, housing, clothing, and furniture, and those who have been referred to other states or federal service programs. These numbers refer to documented cases in the files and

do not illustrate the total number of people who have received these types of services through the Council. For example, in west Tennessee there are thirty-seven cases documented in the files. These included emergency assistance with food, transportation, and medical expenses. However, the outreach recruiter has done extensive counseling and referral in the community which has not been documented in the files. At the mid state office in Nashville at least one hundred and thirteen people received counseling and referral services. This includes seventeen referred to private employment, six referred to state social services, eighteen referred to health services, and fifty-two prisoners in the state penal system who received counseling and assistance. There are also twenty people who received other assistance through this office. In east Tennessee a total of one hundred and twenty-one Native Americans received counseling and referral including referral to private employment, health, social services, legal assistance and advocacy. Again the total does not begin to reflect the total number of Native Americans who have received these types of service. It is a part of the day to day operation of the Council in each of its offices to provide such services and only those who have received special attention have been documented.

The remainder of this report will examine in detail each of the programs administered in each region of the State. This analysis will begin with the west Tennessee office and move across the State. In each of the three regions the service area and Native American population will be outlined with a short assessment of their needs. This will be followed by a detailed examination of the Indian Council programs that have operated there, the number of people they have served and case histories to show the effects of the programs on individuals.

Fritz Niggeler, Executive Director of the Tennessee Indian Council.

Ray Emanuel, Financial officer of the Tennessee Indian Council.

Fritz Niggeler and Michael White interviewing Bill Paisley at the Truth of the Trail.

II. WEST TENNESSEE AREA

Population Characteristics

In 1952, a family of Choctaw people traveled two hundred and fifty miles from their reservation in Mississippi to live and work in Lauderdale County Tennessee. The family ties of the Choctaw people are very strong and include an extended family of grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins. Other family members soon followed and today there are approximately thirty households of Choctaws numbering approximately one hundred and thirty individuals. Another sixty people live in Memphis, having moved to the big city fifty miles away for employment. The first families were share-croppers who lived the bare bones poverty of sharecroppers everywhere. Today nearly one third of the families are still sharecroppers. The entire population speak their native tongue, only a few are fluent in English. Their economic situation and the language barrier has placed them at the bottom of the social structure.

It is in some ways a great achievement that this small band of people have managed to retain their own language. It is the language of the Choctaw nation and is all the Choctaw people in Lauderdale County ever hear in their homes. It is their language taught them through hundreds of generations. Yet it is the largest barrier in dealing with the society they must live in and survive with. The entire Choctaw population of Lauderdale and Shelby counties speak Choctaw, only a few speak English fluently. Most can understand enough English to cope with the basic economic necessities of shopping in the stores, but are reluctant to speak it. The attitude of the white and black community is for the Indians to stay to themselves and there has been remarkable little intermarriage.

The Choctaws have lived in related family units that have carried on their own language and traditions. For this reason the Choctaws are not familiar with the language, manners, and attitudes of the remainder of the county's population. The everyday relationships with employers, representatives of the government, police, medical personnel, even storekeepers are alien for the Choctaws. Along with the language, the lifestyles, customs, family practices, and understanding of economics are different. It is difficult to

realize and overcome these distinctions. It is equally difficult to deal with the economic and governmental structure they must live under. The Choctaws have the attitude that the white and black community and the government does not care about them. It is surely justified by their past dealings. It is easier for them to stay to themselves and survive as best they can than to go through the difficult and often humiliating experience of trying to deal with government service agencies. When such has been tried they have met with little or no success.

However, among themselves, they have carried on their own culture. Choctaw dances still take place in traditional costumes and they still practice their ancient crafts such as pottery, beadwork, and basketry. They still use the blowguns and the traditional game of stickball is very much alive. Some traditional medicine has survived but the people must go to the reservation in Mississippi for medical attention, either modern or traditional. Traditional Choctaw religion has disappeared, the majority of the people are now Baptist and Lauderdale County boasts the only Indian Church in the state of Tennessee. It is a small Baptist Church attended by the Choctaws with a white minister.

Economically the Choctaws are among the poorest people in the county. The average family income is estimated to be approximately seven thousand dollars per year with the average household size of seven or eight. The language barrier and the lack of education forces the Choctaws into farm and factory labor positions which pay minimum wages or less. Nine of the families, nearly one third of the thirty families, are still sharecroppers. The remainder work either in the factories or in jobs which have been provided by CETA funds administered by the Tennessee Indian Council. Only three families own property. The remainder either live in sharecropper tenements or rent their homes.

Needs Assessment

This community has survived but has not been able to successfully enter the economic mainstream of their area. The problems of health, education and employment are all related to the language difficulty. At present, there are no bilingual programs in operation to teach either the adults or the children to speak English. When the children reach the age of six they must attend the public school system in Lauderdale County. Till the age of six their contact with the English language has been incidental and minimal. This produces a situation in the classroom where the children cannot understand the lesson. At present some Choctaw children are being placed in classes with retarded children. As long as this situation persists it will perpetrate a negative self image for the Indian children. This all leads to a very high drop out rate. Also the Indian children have difficulty in getting into the Headstart program. At present only one Indian child is in the program. This is due to the fact that Indian parents are unfamiliar with the paperwork and bureaucratic regulations that govern who is eligible for the program. On the adult level few of the people can read or write English. Their self-concept in relation to the white population is based on a very low level of esteem.

In the area of health services the language is not the only problem. The high cost of local health services and transportation problems make it difficult, if not impossible, for the Choctaws to receive adequate health care. The Indian Health Service has provided a Community Health Representative (CHR) for Lauderdale County. The people are eligible for health services at the Choctaw hospital but it is two hundred and eighty miles away. In emergency situations the CHR will transport people to the hospital. There is very little utilization of the public health department or the private physicians in the area. However, a wide variety of health problems are evident. Diabetes is a major problem along with alcoholism. Few of the people ever receive standard check-ups and problems such as hypertension go undetected. Dental services pose another problem.

The housing situation is also inadequate. The majority of the Choctaws live with large families in small dwellings. One household has twenty members under one roof. The houses are of poor quality and along with the crowded conditions are substandard by Tennessee housing codes.

Program Development

The Tennessee Indian Council is the only organized body which represents these people. They have no elected officials or organizations in Lauderdale County to represent them or stand up for their interests. In the last two years the Indian Council has operated three projects for the Choctaw people. The first was an adult education program to prepare the people without High School diplomas to take High School equivalency tests. This project offered intensive positive reinforcement to upgrade the self-esteem and self-confidence of those who attended. Second, a limited project of Emergency Human Service Assistance was operated to provide small allotments of cash to help individuals and families with food purchases, transportation, and medical expenses. Third, there is an ongoing job program with a bilingual manpower recruiter who has been actively recruiting unemployed Choctaws for public service and nonprofit CETA funded employment and/or classroom training. In addition to these programs, the staff of the Tennessee Indian Council has provided a great deal of assistance such as bilingual counseling and general organizational assistance in numerous activities.

1. GED Program

The bilingual Graduate Equivalency Degree (GED) program marked the first contact of the Tennessee Indian Council with the Choctaw people of Lauderdale County. The program ran from November, 1977, to September, 1978. In November two bilingual Choctaw women were hired to translate and recruit. These paraprofessionals assisted the teachers in the classroom and translated the instructions into Choctaw. The first classes were held in January, 1978. However, there was difficulty in ordering textbooks and the proper texts were not acquired until May. From January to May the classes worked on personal development through goal setting and positive reinforcement. From

May until the end of the program in September classes concentrated on math and social science.

A total of forty-three people enrolled for the classes. Classes were held on Wednesday night in Memphis and on Thursday night in Ripley. By the end of the program four people passed their GED exams. The two bilingual Choctaw assistants not only recruited the participants but helped to provide transportation to the classes as this was a major problem for most participants. They also served as translators in the classroom. The instructor would teach in English and they would translate sentence by sentence into Choctaw. When the instructor asked questions, they would translate the questions into Choctaw and the responses into English. They visited the homes of the participants and provided assistance with goal setting and homework. The assistants helped the participants who had no social security cards or birth certificates to fill out the forms to receive a social security number and proper birth certification.

The most important aspect of the program was the systematic practice of positive reinforcement in the classroom. As stated previously the Choctaw's self-image in relation to white people has been rooted in a low level of self-esteem. As a result of this it has become a trait of the Choctaws to be shy. At the beginning of the class the participants were reluctant to talk to the instructor or to each other. For the participants it was a slow process of coming to accept themselves in a positive relationship with the white instructor. With positive reinforcement it was impressed on the participants that it was alright to think of yourself as a person capable of doing something worthwhile.

The participants ranged in age from sixteen to the mid sixties with many people in their forties and fifties. Many of the people could not write their name. The classes had to begin at the most rudimentary level and work at different speeds according to the needs of the participants. Emphasis was placed on teaching how to set goals and follow through with the proper activity. This included not only goals for the classroom but personal goals related to the home and job. When goals were achieved, positive reinforcement was used to maintain the progress.

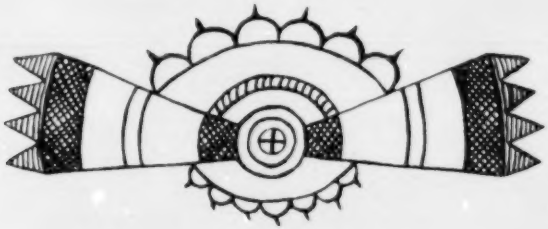
When the instructor felt a person was ready, one of the bilingual trainers would assist with transportation to the testing center. While several other people were felt to be ready, there were problems with personal confidence and some would not take the test. However, the successes of the program extend far beyond the four people who passed their GED. For example there was a fifty year old woman who would sit for the entire hour without speaking. During the home visits by the bilingual trainers she would declare that she was too old to learn, that she could not learn. After a few months of goal setting and positive reinforcement she learned to sign her name and began

learning math. She became willing to speak out in the classroom, to set her own goals, and to speak out in encounters outside the classroom.

The effects of the program of positive reinforcement were evident outside the classroom. People who were previously extremely shy and withdrawn began to become more self-confident, to set their own goals, and to speak out.

The people quickly developed pride in the work they did at home and benefited by the change in self-concept. These changes made it easier and more effective for them to deal with the society at large. A continuing program is needed to follow-up the success of this program and to bring more people to the classroom.

The major problem was the length of the program. There was not sufficient time to cover all the subjects and little time was given to reading or writing as the students were not advanced enough to deal with the textbooks.



2. Job Program

Starting in February of 1978, the Tennessee Indian Council began the operation of a job program in Lauderdale and Shelby Counties. A bilingual manpower recruiter was hired and using funds from CETA Title I and III began to develop jobs in the public and non-profit sector and to recruit unemployed Indian people for the jobs. Native American people who were certified by the Department of Employment Security could be placed in a CETA funded position.

There are three types of positions: Work Experience, Public Service Employment, and Classroom Training. The Public Service Employment provides a job which will last for one year. The Work Experience currently lasts for three months. In both cases, Public Service Employment and Work Experience, the recruiter goes to public and non-profit organizations to negotiate with their personnel director to have them hire an Indian person whose salary will be paid by CETA. Then, at the end of the CETA funding it is hoped the agency or organization will hire the person in an unsubsidized position similar to the job they worked with CETA funds. In the category of Classroom Training the recruiter can enroll a person in a vocational or other training school, pay their tuition and books plus give them a small salary.

From February, 1978, to April, 1979, a total of twenty-eight people have been hired as a part of this program, twenty-one of these were Work Experience, five were PSE, and two were Classroom workers. There have been three positive placements where the workers have continued in the same job after the subsidy ends. At least ten of the twenty-eight have gone on to find unsubsidized employment of their own. Finally, there are currently seven people working on CETA funded programs.

When this program began it was advertised on local radio stations. Because the Choctaw community is a small tightly knit group word of mouth contacts were successful in locating potential clients. The recruiter also worked to contact local public and non-profit organizations to develop jobs for the people she recruited. Jobs were developed with the Ripley Housing Authority, the University of Tennessee, the local hospitals, the Public Health Department, the Department of Human Services, the City of Halls, the Tennessee Indian Council and various other institutions in the area.

When an individual needs employment they contact the recruiter. She will fill out an intake form and determine through the Department of Employment Security if the person is eligible for CETA counseling and referral. If they are not eligible, the recruiter provides any other assistance in the way of counseling or referral and has managed to help individuals who are not CETA eligible find unsubsidized employment. Those who are eligible are placed in a job or put into a training program. They are provided various supportive services such as child care and transportation. The recruiter helps the client fill out the proper paper work at the Department of Employment Security and when the person is properly certified they can begin work. The recruiter also does follow-up on all clients including on the job assistance with personnel problems and positive reinforcement. This is a very important aspect because the employees all face the difficulty of the language barrier in their place of employment and many problems which would not be serious for an English speaking person are very serious for the Choctaws.

The success of this program can best be demonstrated by looking at the case histories of a few of the clients. The first is the case of a young Indian woman who had been raised in foster homes. She had a poor self-concept and had difficulty finding and holding a job. She attended the GED classes and benefited from the positive reinforcement. She was then referred to the jobs program and given a job. She had problems on the job with insults and criticism from a fellow worker. The recruiter followed up on her and told her it was important to stay on the job and provided positive reinforcement. In addition, the recruiter referred her to the Community Health Representative who carried her to the Indian hospital in Mississippi to deal with health problems. She has subsequently moved to Memphis and has found employment on her own. In another case the recruiter took a client to the vocational school where

she was tested for job aptitude. She was not able to pass the tests so the recruiter referred her to a Vocational Rehabilitation Doctor but the client would not go. The recruiter is still following up this case. In another case a man was hired under PSE to work in the local hospital. During his PSE period he was trained and at the end of the PSE period he was hired at the hospital in a better job. There are numerous examples of people who were untrained and unfamiliar with how to get a job and how to keep a job but, through working a CETA position and the counseling and positive reinforcement by the recruiter, have managed to go on to find better jobs for themselves. One of the clients who attended vocational school studied data processing and has gone on to find her own employment in Memphis as a data processor. Another client was placed in a job at a State Correctional Institute as a trainee. At the end of the CETA funding this person was able to pass the state tests and move in a permanent position at the Institution. Finally, a client was placed in the Human Services Office at Ripley to serve as a bilingual translator and provide transportation for Choctaws who needed the service. However, at the end of the CETA funding the Human Service Office did not continue the position.

The real success of this program is not mirrored in the statistics of number hired and positive placements. Rather it is illustrated by the fact that people who never had a positive work experience have had an opportunity to see that they can develop skills that can be used and that they are capable of holding a job. Because of the intensive bilingual counseling by the recruiter using positive reinforcement many people have been able to go from the CETA funded positions to unsubsidized employment. These people now understand how to get a job and know that they need not quit when problems develop on the job site.

The main criticism of the program has been the short time period of the Work Experience. With only ninety days it is difficult to work in a job then lose it so soon. The clients have noted that the jobs are all at minimum pay. Further, many of the positions have not been maintained after the CETA subsidy runs out. However, even in short term positions the clients have benefited by the experience of having gotten and worked on a job.

3. General Assistance

During the winter of 1978-79, cash subsidies of up to forty dollars were provided to thirty-seven individuals and families. The money for this was supplied by the Tennessee Indian Council and administered by the manpower recruiter and the Community Health Representative of the Indian Health Service. This money was used in cases where, had it not been available, the family would have had to do without essentials such as food, medical services, transportation to and from a job, and educational expenses. Examples of this service include money for books provided to a woman in vocational school, money for medicine for a

woman in the hospital, money for food for several sharecropper families during the winter, and money for doctor's visits. Unfortunately, this program is no longer in operation and funding for next year is uncertain. However, in these cases, a small cash assistance helped people who had nowhere else to turn.

In the course of these programs a great deal of assistance has been provided to the community which does not fall under any headings. For example, during the GED program the staff helped to organize a Choctaw exhibition at the West Tennessee State Fair. They made arrangements for a booth at the fair, provided transportation, and helped people get organized. The first night of the fair twelve dancers performed traditional Choctaw dances. Then each night various crafts-people would display and sell their crafts. These included traditional Choctaw clothing, baskets, blowguns, beadwork, and pottery. Approximately sixty dollars a night was made through the sales of craft items. Ten percent of the money went to the fair and the rest went to the crafts person.

In order to be recognized as a tribal unit the Choctaw band in Tennessee must acquire some land. In order to do this an organization was formed and called the West Tennessee Indian Affairs Corporation. Its goal was to organize the community and acquire funds to purchase a piece of land. However, the organization fell off and meetings were discontinued. During the GED program the Indian Council staff helped to reorganize the Corporation and started to have meetings again. The staff helped with publicity and transportation. However, after the GED program, the attendance fell off and meetings were discontinued.

The Indian Council has been able to work with the Middle Tennessee Health Systems Agency to provide a medical dictionary of Choctaw and English terms. The bilingual staff with the assistance of the Community Health Representative supplied the words and the Health System Agency printed the booklet. The dictionary has been distributed to the local hospitals and health departments as well as the Indian hospital in Mississippi. Recently a Choctaw child received severe burns and was taken to Boston for special treatment. A copy of the dictionary was used in Boston to help communicate with the child and his family.

The Indian Council has also placed two VISTA workers in Ripley and one in Memphis, all three are bilingual. They assist the Recruiter and perform intakes, referral and counseling when she is out of the office. One of the VISTA workers helps to refer people to the Community Health Representative as well. These three people are receiving valuable training and are learning to deal with a variety of governmental agencies through their referrals. One of the VISTA employees has worked with the Tennessee Rural Ministry, a branch of the Catholic church, to distribute vegetable and flower seeds for family gardens. So far twelve Choctaw Families have received seeds.

The staff has also provided other services such as translating. One woman who had a job was having difficulty with her supervisor. She was afraid of him and could not communicate. With the help of a Tennessee Indian Council staff member to translate she was able to solve her problem without quitting her job. This type of assistance has been provided families who want to apply for food stamps as well as helping them properly fill out the forms.

The Indian Council is the only organization in Tennessee which represents the Indian people. The Council has provided the Choctaws in Lauderdale County with a focus of identity. For the first time the Indians have an organization made up of Indians acting to meet their needs.

Alma Gardinier, Arts and crafts instructor for the cultural revitalization program.

Sam Grey Wolf instructing the East Tennessee cultural revitalization class.

Participants in the cultural revitalization class.

III. MID TENNESSEE AREA

Population Characteristics

The service area for the mid-Tennessee office of the Council extends from Jackson in the west to Cookeville in the east. Within this area there are three communities with Native American populations. They are: Clarksville, Tullahoma, and McMinnville. However, virtually every county in the area, both urban and rural, has some Native American population. For the most part the Indian population in middle Tennessee consists of scattered families from various tribes. The exception is McMinnville where Chief Lone White Eagle has worked to revitalize the Cherokee community.

Needs Assessment

The Native Americans in this area are faced with problems in the areas of employment, education, health, and social services. The problems of employment and education are related. Without the basic educational framework of the predominant society the Indians experience difficulty securing employment or the training needed to acquire employment. There is also the corresponding educational need to learn about traditional Native American cultural heritage. The off-reservation Indians are between two cultures and not fully integrated into either one. Educational opportunities should be available for them to enter the educational system and also learn about their own heritage and culture.

In the area of health there are always health problems associated with low income living standards. The cost of medical services is itself prohibitive for low income families and many have never had doctor visits or physicals. This of course leads to high incidences of diseases such as hypertension and tuberculosis.

The Native American population is not recognized as a distinct entity by the social services bureaucracy. This problem is reflected in the attitude of the Native American population toward the representatives of the social services. Often time they will not receive social services for which they are eligible because they are not familiar with, or willing to deal with the paperwork and interviews.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

1. Jobs Program

In December of 1977, the Indian Council began operating CETA Titles I and III jobs programs. These provided employment to any person who was at least one quarter Indian descent and could be certified as CETA eligible by the Department of Employment Security. One outreach recruiter was hired to develop job sites and help intake, orient, and counsel the clients.

Radio, television, and newspapers were used to advertise the program in all the metropolitan areas in middle Tennessee. Also posters were placed in all offices of Employment Security, Human Services, and Food Stamps. The ads and posters notified the population that all persons of Native American descent who could be certified as CETA eligible could receive employment and training through the Indian Council.

The outreach recruiter went to public and non-profit organizations to develop jobs with the salary subsidized by CETA. It is the goal of the program to have the sponsoring agency take over the position at the end of the CETA subsidy. Before the Department of Employment Security will certify a person the recruiter must have a job available. The recruiter does an initial intake and certifies that the client is at least one quarter Native American. The recruiter also provides assistance with W-4 Forms and fills out a Notice of Selection. When this is signed by the Executive Director the client is ready to go to work.

The recruiter provides supportive services where needed. These include; child care, transportation, health services, counseling, and referral. The recruiter also provides counseling and referral to clients who are not eligible for the CETA program. Where possible these clients are referred to jobs in the private sector. The recruiter does follow-up on all clients.

Jobs have been developed with the Metro Police Department, United Southeastern Tribes, Inc., Tennessee Indian Council, Inc., Scarritt College, Armed Forces Entrance Station, General Hospital, Army Recruiting Station, Highland School for Girls, and the Spencer Youth Center among others.

A total of one hundred and seventeen clients have received services in the job program to date. The following table illustrates the number of clients served and the type of service they received.

TABLE III

MID TENNESSEE JOB PROGRAM SUMMARY

Received Employment	Number
Work Experience	20
Public Service Employment	10
Classroom Training	2
Summer Youth	22
TOTAL Receiving Employment (through May, 1979)	54
Job Counseling and Referral	
Summer Youth	46
Other	17
TOTAL Counseling and Referral for Job	63
TOTAL Receiving Job Related Services	117

Of the fifty-four people who received employment twenty were hired under the category of Work Experience. These jobs lasted six months at the start of the program but have subsequently been shortened to three months. The Public Service Employment jobs last for one year. All of these are jobs in public and/or non-profit organizations. The classroom training involves either education toward a High School diploma or training to develop skills which will insure employment. These participants are paid a salary while they are in the classroom.

The Summer Youth Program hired twenty-two unemployed youth for a ninety day period. During this time they worked at several job sites in health related programs. There were a total of sixty-eight applicants who applied for the Summer Youth Program but only twenty-two jobs were available. The other forty-six received counseling and referral.

Finally seventeen persons who could not be certified by the Department of Employment Security or would not accept the available employment received counseling and referral. When possible these clients were referred either to employment in the private sector or to other social services.

The statistics in the table show the number of people who have received services because of the job program. It does not show the more human side, the circumstances of the people who took the jobs and how they benefited by it. For example, in one case, an Indian man who had been transient and indigent was placed in a job with the Metro Action Commission. He subse-

quently got into trouble and was placed in jail. The Indian Council provided him with clothing for his trial and other legal and personal assistance. The Indian Council was his only advocate. In another case a woman with a small child had no housing, transportation, or employment. She was placed in classroom training and provided assistance with her first month's rent and transportation. She was also referred to the food stamp program. Two of the participants have been picked up by their employers; one is a secretary at the United Southeastern Tribes, the other a business manager with a union. At least nine of the participants were able to go on to other jobs at the end of their CETA funding. The benefits of this type of employment go beyond the economic benefits of the weekly paycheck. For many of the participants the experience of having a job is in itself a learning experience that enables them to go on and find an unsubsidized job on their own.

2. Community Assessment—Title VI

This research project served a twofold purpose. First, to benefit the Indian Council through a research effort to gather data about the Native American population in middle Tennessee and the social services that are available to them, and secondly, to benefit the employees by developing job skills and greater employability through their work experience. A total of twenty-five people were employed; twenty were placed in research positions entitled Community Service Specialists, a coordinator was hired to supervise the research efforts, along with three clerk typists and an accountant clerk. The twenty Community Service Specialists were divided into six research teams including; health, education, legal, nutrition, social services and employment. Each team was responsible to survey and interview the agencies and organizations that provide services in their research area. This effort encompassed a forty-four county area. During the interview the type of service offered and eligibility criteria were documented. It was also determined if the agency provided services to any Native American clients.

This data was compiled into a research report and a handbook. The research report documented the methodology and outlined the research findings. The handbook showed for each of the forty-four counties all the services available. This has been used as a valuable tool for referral. Any client needing service in the forty-four counties can be informed concerning their eligibility and referred to the nearest location of the service agency.

The legal services research team visited all the state prisons in the forty-four counties. These included: Chattanooga Penal Center, Turney Center, Pikeville Youth Center, Joelton Youth Center, Spencer Youth Center, Highland Rim Institute for Girls, and Highland Center for Women. At each prison an interview was conducted to determine if they had any Native American prisoners. They located twenty-eight Native American men and twenty-four women. These people were visited and when possible services were provided. The members of the legal team developed a relationship with the wardens and were able to gain free access to the yard to visit the inmates. In many cases the prisoners had virtually no one outside the prison

they could talk with. The team members would eat meals with them and provide them with reading materials. They worked with the Methodist Church to get clothing for court appearances. Representatives of the legal team appeared as character witnesses and in some cases talked with the Judge and the attorneys to help get sentences reduced. Appearances were also made at pardon and parole hearings. When possible, jobs were developed and made available to help move people out of prison and back to society. They also worked with the families of the prisoners and provided counseling and referral to food stamps and other social services.

The education team visited the offices of the Board of Education in each county to determine how many Native Americans were enrolled in the public school system. They also examined the textbooks used in history and social science to review and evaluate the content that dealt with Indians. All the textbooks in the state were reviewed and the material that dealt with Indians was evaluated to determine if it was historically accurate an unbiased. This report was submitted to the State Committee that reviews textbooks and recommendations were made as to which texts should be adopted or retained.

As a result of this research the Indian Council developed contacts in virtually every state, local, and private service agency in the forty-four counties. The services provided by each institution were documented and recorded in the handbook. The administration and supervision of the twenty-five employees often proved to be a problem and consumed the time of the regular Tennessee Indian Council staff. The employees all had to be certified as CETA eligible by the Department of Employment Security, further, veterans and disabled veterans were given preference. Thus the staff was largely untrained in dealing with the office and interview situation. Through working on the grant many of the employees developed skills and training which they had never had the opportunity to use before. Because of this they have been able to go on and get better jobs.

3. Summer Youth Program

The Summer Youth Program ran from June through August 1978. The goal of this program was to provide orientation to the world of work for twenty disadvantaged teenaged residents of Davidson County. There were a total of twenty-two positions; twenty Health Service Trainees and two coordinators. All the employees had to be between the ages of fourteen and eighteen, in school, and economically disadvantaged. A total of sixty-eight youth were interviewed and found eligible. Of the twenty-two hired six were Native American, twelve were black and four were white. The coordinators like the Health Service Trainees were in-school youth.

The objective of the program was to provide orientation toward a career in the health field. The youth were exposed to the world of work in health related fields. The staff of the Indian Council worked with the youth to motivate them to stay in school and to start now developing work skills in the health field. They were also helped to develop positive work habits.

Job sites were developed by the Tennessee Indian Council staff at the Easter Seals Society, Outlook Nashville, Inc., Senior Citizens, Inc., Indian Health Service, and the West Tennessee Indian Affairs Corporation. At Easter Seals and Outlook Nashville the youth helped with retarded and handicapped children on a one to one basis assisting with recreational and crafts activities. At the Indian Health Service and the Indian Affairs Corporation they assisted with supportive activities in the offices. The youth were rotated on a weekly basis so each person could work at each job site, providing them with work experience in several locations and activities. At each work site the youth were provided orientation and counseling by the professional staff.

Most of the participants had never worked and were able for the first time to develop career orientation. They had to confront the idea of their future employment and that they would soon be faced with developing a career. All of the participants have stayed in school and at least five have developed an interest in pursuing health related careers.

4. Title II—Office Staff

The Title II funding provides for the present staffing of the mid-Tennessee office. This includes twelve positions; a three person program development staff, two people in Health, two in Social Services, one each in Education, Nutrition, and Legal, one secretary and an Accountant Clerk.

The Program Development staff has been involved in the application process for CETA funding under Title I, III, and I-4%. This staff has sought to develop grant funds from non-CETA related sources. To date seven projects have been developed and the applications submitted.

TABLE IV

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

Title	Source of Funding
Ethnic Heritage	HEW, Ethnic Heritage Program
Dance Project	Tennessee Arts Commission
Health Careers Project	HEW, Native American Programs
Indian Village	Metro City Government
Pre-History of Tennessee	National Endowment for the Humanities
Entice Project	Community Service Administration
Message from the Earth	Tennessee Committee for the Humanities

These projects have all been submitted since January 1979 and to date none have been acted upon by the funding agencies.

It is the goal of the Social Services team to provide referral services to the Native American population. They provide not only referral but also assistance with paper work and transportation when necessary. They have reviewed the handbook developed under Title VI and have developed contacts

with various social service agencies including; Food Stamps, Home Development Project, AFDC, Health Care Services, HUD-Housing, Metro Action, and Matthew Walker Health Clinic.

They have provided referral and assistance for six clients to date. They have also provided back-up research for the program development staff and worked on presentations for various seminars. However, their work is best illustrated in a few case histories. In the first, a person contacted the office needing assistance. The Social Services team first contacted the Metro Social Services department for assistance with housing. When the client was able to move into an apartment, they helped with obtaining food stamps and helped obtain a birth certificate for a child. In another case they were able to obtain a four thousand dollar grant for home improvement and to help enroll the client for food stamps. They provided assistance with all the paper work and with transportation. They were able to help another client with medical care at Matthew Walker Health Clinic. They have made referrals to the Red Cross, the Vocational Rehabilitation offices, the GED program and the AFDC.

The Health team has provided services to eighteen clients. They have developed contacts with various health service agencies and refer clients to these agencies. For example, a sixty-nine year old Iowa Indian woman recently moved to Tennessee. Upon arriving in Tennessee she refused to eat. Her family called the Council for assistance. She was referred to an all Indian nursing home but could not go there. The Health Department was contacted concerning Medicaid and the local nursing homes in the county were contacted. She was placed on a waiting list. To be eligible for Medicaid she had to produce various vital statistics and the Health team helped compile the records. She was found eligible for Medicaid and placed in a nursing home in the county where the family lives. This woman's daughter was also referred to the Association of Indian Nurses for possible assistance with nurses training. In another case a woman called for assistance, her husband had locked her and her children out of the house. The Department of Human Services and the Mid Cumberland Community Agency were contacted. Counseling was provided for the husband and wife and the husband was referred to a job.

A young Indian woman called the office for assistance when her son received severe burns. After he received treatment at the General Hospital the charges were reduced through the intervention of the Council. An older Indian woman who had become severely depressed was referred to the Council. The Health team investigated and found she was having problems with her neighbors. Some young people had been harassing her. The Public Health Department was contacted about chore assistance and HUD Housing programs were con-

tacted concerning subsidized housing. Assistance was provided with the paper work and when a subsidized apartment was located the Health team helped move her furniture and goods. Several other clients have been referred to dental services at Matthew Walker Health Clinic.

The Tennessee Indian Council's legal services are provided by an on-staff lawyer. He provides legal counseling and will appear in court and before pardon and parole board concerning cases involving Native Americans. This services is provided as a last resource for Native Americans who are not otherwise represented and cannot afford to hire legal representatives. Legal service is provided as a last resource for Native Americans who are not otherwise represented and cannot afford to hire legal representatives. Legal service is provided to help organize, charter and incorporate other Indian organizations. Further, legal assistance is provided with introducing Indian advocacy bills to the State legislature.

Indian man in jail who was contacted through Title VI asked for legal representation to have his sentence reduced. After studying the transcripts of his trial and interviewing some of the other parties involved it was decided that some action should be taken. After his first appeal he was not able to hire further legal assistance. The District Attorney's office was contacted and a petition for reconsideration and post conviction release was filed. The motion for release was based on an abridgement of his constitutional rights. A full hearing on his case is expected in the next month. Another prisoner has been helped with appearances before parole boards in Arkansas and Texas. He had been preparing his own paperwork and with some legal assistance his papers were refiled and he was cleared for parole in Tennessee by the parole boards in Arkansas and Texas. In other cases Native Americans have been represented before the Social Security offices. A man who was fired found he was unable to draw Social Security. He asked for assistance from the Council and the employer was contacted and interviewed. An appeal was filed and was ruled in his favor. Also a disabled woman with medical problems was cut off from her Social Security benefits without notification. A suit has been filed in Federal District Court to sue the Social Security for reinstatement.

Legal research has been conducted to determine the status of the land treaties which served as the basis for transfer of Indian lands. The legislative records have also been searched for reference to Indian rights. A bill has been prepared to preserve the historical heritage of the Indian population. The Bill has three major divisions: first, to provide scholarships to state universities for Native American students, second, to see that Indian children who are up for adoption are not transferred to another state to find Indian parents, and third, to have Native American established as a racial category on all state forms.

The education and nutrition staff provide counseling and referral in their areas. They also provide Indian advocacy at the level of the state departments that deal with nutrition and education.

5. VISTA

The VISTA program is a voluntary program to provide assistance to non-profit organizations. The Indian Council is supervising the activities of ten volunteers. It is the goal of the volunteers to recruit and refer Native Americans for employment and health services. The volunteers do not receive salary but do get $285 a month for allowance plus up to $35 a month mileage. They volunteer services for thirty-five hours a week but are on call twenty-four hours a day. To be eligible for VISTA the volunteers must be on a poverty level and are expec'ed to be on the same economic level as the clients they serve. This is determined on the basis of yearly salary and total worth.

The Tennessee Indian Council is supervising the work of ten volunteers around the state. This program will be up for renewal in September, 1979. The volunteers are divided as follows; three in Oneida, one in White Oak, one in Madisonville, two in Nashville, two in Ripley, and one in Memphis.

The two volunteers in Nashville have provided back up assistance in the offices of the Indian Council. They have also worked with emergency flood relief programs providing assistance and referral. They have handled eight cases of referral for Native American families. In east and west-Tennessee the Indian population is not as scattered as in mid-Tennessee and the volunteers there are members of the Native American communities and have personal knowledge of most of the community. In east Tennessee there are five volunteers who work in four Native American communities. They work in offices and go out to the communities to visit families and provide assistance. They have provided job referral, food stamp assistance and referral for health and education problems. Transportation is provided for people who need health or social services and visits are made to isolated elderly and senior citizen homes. They have worked in craft programs and assisted in finding fuel for people in need. They seek out people in need and provide assistance and referral.

The VISTAs in west Tennessee are bilingual. They have provided assistance to families which have lost their homes, have provided transportation to health services and assistance with paper work. They have helped enroll children in Headstart and to fill out job applications. They make home visits to elderly Indians and those recovering from serious illness, they have distributed free garden seeds to families, helped find medical supplies for patients, and provided bilingual assistance to various agencies.

6. General Assistance

The Indian Council has served as a last resort for many Native American people. It is the role of the Council to provide direct social services in some cases, specifically when referrals have not worked or are not available. This is above and beyond the contractual agreements. When other services are

not available the Council will do whatever is in its power to provide assistance. This service is extended to any Native American or handicapped person who seeks assistance from the Council. The employees of the Council recognize that they must on occasions step in to provide assistance that extends beyond their contractually defined job responsibilities. This illustrates that the work of the Council encompasses and goes beyond the administration of specific programs.

The Council heard about a blind Indian man who was a tenant farmer living in substandard housing on a small fixed income. The Council has worked with the Agency for the Blind to provide him with glasses and has helped him look for more suitable work and housing. In another case Senator Howard Baker called the Council for assistance with an Indian child. The child had been diagnosed mentally retarded and placed in classes for the retarded. Upon investigation it was determined that the child was not retarded but deaf. The child was taken to the hospital for hearing tests and referred to an agency for placement in education classes. In another case a handicapped Indian woman living in poor housing was provided housing assistance and furniture. She was given emergency food and referred to the food stamp and employment programs. Another handicapped person was helped to return to school and find work. In other cases battered women have been helped with emergency food, transportation, and housing. In emergency cases the Council has stepped in and provided assistance when there was no place else the people could look to.

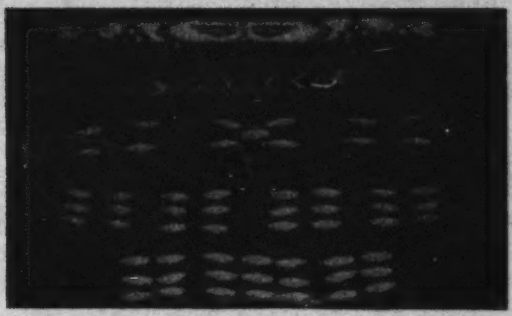
The Council has a special recognition of the handicapped. The Council extends the full range of its services to the handicapped regardless of race, creed, or sex. The Council is aware of the special problems of the handicapped and seeks to serve as an advocate for the needs of the handicapped and will help provide whatever assistance is available to meet those needs.

7. Other

The Council has established an on-going video-archive to preserve the knowledge and current status of the Indian population of the state. This archive was born out of the recognition that the knowledge carried through years of oral tradition is in danger of dying out. In order to preserve the knowledge, and to do so in the oral manner that characterizes it, video tape nas been used. Tennessee Technological University has been extremely generous with their black and white portapacks and has allowed the Council to borrow equipment when the opportunity was available to tape. At present nine hours of video tapes have been shot. This includes interviews with traditional spokesmen concerning oral history and medicine, traditional dances, and arts and crafts. These tapes present a profile of the contemporary Native American population in the state and preserve, in its oral format, their traditional knowledge.

The Council also prints a monthly newsletter called *Let the People Speak*. This is mailed out to anyone who is interested in the activities of the Council and/or the current status of the Native American residents of our state.

It is one of the goals of the Council to educate the population about the status of Native Americans through conferences and seminars. In line with this the Council worked with the Middle Tennessee Health Systems Agency to put on a one day conference on Indian Health. This conference was held in July, 1978, in Nashville. Representatives of all the major health providers were present along with representatives of the Native American communities throughout the state. The health care providers put on a series of presentations to outline the services they have available for Native Americans. There was open dialogue, for the first time, between Native American residents and health care providers. The conference served two primary purposes; first, to increase the awareness of the health care providers to the fact that there is a sizable number of Native Americans in the state who have unique problems and need services; and second, to let the Native Americans know what health services were being offered and how to go about receiving them. Also as a part of the conference the MTHSA printed up a Choctaw dictionary of health terms. The Choctaw community in Tennessee has benefited by the use of this dictionary.



Some arts and crafts from the cultural revitalization project.

An example of loom beadwork.

Traditional Indian clothing made during the class.

IV. EAST TENNESSEE AREA

Population Characteristics

The service region for the East Tennessee office includes the area of the state east of Cookeville. The office is located in Knoxville and serves a population estimated to be over two thousand people. This population is approximately eighty percent Cherokee and twenty percent off-reservation Indians from various tribes. Services are being provided to communities which have concentrations of Native Americans including Oneida, Huntsville, White Oak, Madisonville, Petros, Rogersville, Johnson City, and Bristol as well as Knoxville.

The Indian population in the service area can be divided into two categories: first, the rural Indians who concentrate in the small communities in eastern Tennessee consisting primarily of scattered families of Cherokees, and second, the more urbanized off-reservation Indians who are often in need of employment, housing, and transportation.

The Cherokee population has formed various organizations to attempt to get tribal recognition and to be eligible for federal assistance. These organizations are: 1) the Cherokee Tribe for Improvement, 2) the Eastern Band of Cherokee, and 3) the Upper Cumberland Cherokee Band. Their combined memberships totals around two thousand. Only the Cherokee Tribe for Improvement is presently active. The others have had organizational problems and are presently inactive. The Cherokee Tribe for Improvement still has officers and regular meetings. However, they do not provide any services to the community. The Tennessee Indian Council is the only organization in east Tennessee which represents all the Indian peoples and is actively operating programs to meet the needs of the Native American people.

In contrast to the Choctaws of west Tennessee the Indian peoples in east Tennessee do not speak their tribal language. The Cherokee language in east Tennessee has steadily been on the way to extinction. The arts and crafts of the people have survived as the only traditional expression of their Native American heritage.

This population has suffered from discrimination in employment and education. These problems are inherent living with a cultural heritage different from the society at large in which they must survive.

Needs Assessment

The needs of the Native American population can be summarized in four categories: 1) early childhood education, 2) employment, 3) Social Services representation, and 4) cultural revitalization. The Indian children experience difficulties with being thrust from the Native American culture carried within the family into the public school system. The cultural standards and expectations of the school system are different and often inconflict with their own. This could be alleviated by a program that recognizes both cultures, and initiates the Native American children into the educational standards in a non-threatenting manner. The employment program offered by the Tennessee Indian Council has helped many of unemployed Native Americans find work and receive training in skills which could lead to permanent unsubsidized employment. This program needs to be continued to extend the training, and upgrade the employment level of the population. It is also needed to provide employment for that portion of the population which is just arriving from the reservation. These people need employment as the first step toward integration with their new community.

The Native American communities around the state have a long tradition of difficult and dehumanizing relations with social service agencies. This has resulted, in part, from lack of familiarity with the paperwork and regulations of social service agencies. The Indian communities need social service representatives who are themselves Native American. These representatives would provide assistance with gaining access to the services the people are eligible to receive.

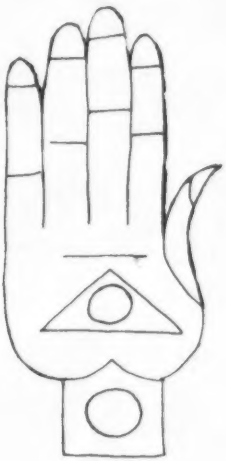
Lastly, there is a great need for an organization that the Native American population could identify with, and use as a gathering place to reestablish their traditional culture. This would provide an atmosphere for cultural revitalization, with such things as traditional arts and crafts, dances, language revitalization, and other traditional Native American practices. There is also a need for a location in Knoxville for Indians who have been living on a reservation and move to the metropolitan area. This could serve to provide housing, counseling and referral, to ease the transition from the reservation.

Program Development

The Tennessee Indian Council's first program in east Tennessee started in November, 1976. A CETA grant provided funding for a jobs program, one recruiter but no office space. With this program people of Native American descent could be placed in CETA subsidized jobs in public and non-profit organizations and in training programs.

1. Job Program

The recruiter placed posters in the offices of the Department of Employment Security in Knoxville and the surrounding counties to announce that jobs were available for anyone of Native American descent. Also contacts developed through the offices of the Indian Council and other Native American organizations were used. The recruiter was responsible for developing jobs and contacted various public and non-profit organizations to establish positions which would have the salary paid through CETA. These jobs would hopefully become permanent with the organization assuming responsibility for the salary at the end of the CETA subsidy.



The funding includes three basic categories: 1) Work Experience (WE), 2) Public Service Employment (PSE), and 3) Classroom Training. At the onset of the program the Work Experience subsidy ended after six months. This has been shortened to three months. The Public Service Employment runs for twelve months.

The recruiter provides supportive services for participants in the program. This includes assistance with transportation, child care, health referral, counseling, and when possible referral to a job in unsubsidized employment. The recruiter fills out an intake form for each new client and tells the person what the program has to offer. The client must then be certified by the Department of Employment Security as CETA eligible. Before they certify a person the recruiter must have a job lined up. When this is complete a Notice of Selection is filled out and signed by the Executive Director of the Indian Council. This clears the client for either a job or some form of classroom training.

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Thus far the Knoxville office of the Indian Council has handled a total of one hundred and seventy-nine clients. this includes one hundred and sixteen clients up till December, 1978, sixty-three from then to May, 1979. This includes many people who were serviced in a capacity other than the job program and will be reviewed later. In the job program sixty-four clients have been placed in Work Experience positions, five in Public Service Employment, eight in Classroom Training, and five in VISTA. A total of seventy-four Native American people who had been unemployed for at least fifteen weeks were placed in jobs. Many of these had been chronically unemployed and for some it was the first work experience.

Jobs were developed at a wide variety of sites in eastern Tennessee including: the Economic Development Corp., Home Child Development Center, Douglas Cherokee Public Health Services, Knoxville City Hall, Mountain Child Care Center, Anderson City Community Action Committee, Park Services, U.T., Knox County Court House, City of Huntsville, Public School System, Opportunities Industrialization Committee, YMCA, and many others. Jobs have included: teachers aide, outreach worker, maintenance, secretarial, clerical, receptionist, bookkeeping, phone operator, and arts and crafts teacher.

The classroom training has included nurses training, air-conditioning repair, business studies, and secretarial studies.

In many cases the program has provided a service to people who were outside the job market. Because they were placed in a job and had the experience of knowing there was something they could do, they have been able to go on to find employment in the private sector using skills that were established during the CETA subsidized employment. For example, a person who was placed in a maintenance position with the Health Department was able to go on and get a job driving a truck in an unsubsidized position. Another person placed as a bookkeeper was able to go on and get another job as a permanent bookkeeper for a private firm. In another case a person was placed as a bookkeeper and secretary at a Child Development Center and when the CETA subsidy ended she was hired to direct the entire program at that center. A person hired as a cook in the school system was subsequently hired by the school as a permanent employee in the same position.

Once a person has entered the program they are provided with counseling, referral, and follow-up. Each person is contacted within thirty days after leaving the job and thereafter at ninety day intervals. When possible they are referred to employment in the private sector. Otherwise they are provided with any assistance that is available including referral to other government service agencies and counseling to help them stay on any new employment that has been found.

2. GED Program

The Indian Council has established a General Equivalency Degree program for Native Americans in east Tennessee who have not

completed High School and are CETA eligible. Preliminary work to establish this program was initiated by the Executive Director in late 1978. Representatives of the Indian Council held meetings for the Native American populations centered around Oneida and White Oak. It was determined there was a real need for such a program and petitions were signed to demonstrate that people were willing to enroll in the program. At that time the only GED classes available were held in Knoxville and the individuals in the Indian communities could not get in until a long waiting list had been processed.

The first class was held December 18, 1979, the program is funded through a CETA Title 1-4% grant. The contract provides for three staff positions and a consultant. The lead instructor, Mr. Orie Rice, is a native American and has been a teacher in the area for many years. The two teaching aide positions are filled by Native Americans who are teaching cultural revitalization with instruction in the Cherokee language, arts and crafts and other aspects of traditional culture. The consultant is in the classroom four days a month providing a program of positive reinforcement and goal setting. The program is unique and inovative being designed to meet the needs of the local Native American community. It is also unique in that the program is staffed by Native Americans from the community and is administered by a Native American organization, i.e., the Indian Council.

Classes are held twice a week at two locations; Monday and Thursday night classes are held at Winfield in the Elementary School, Tuesday and Wednesday night classes are held at the White Oak Community Center. The total enrollment of the program is limited to fifty people. There are thirty-four at Winfield and sixteen at White Oak. In order to enroll the fifty participants ninety-three people were processed on intake forms. There is a current waiting list of twenty two people who are eligible but because of the limited size of the program are not in the classroom. The staff provided assistance with transportation and paper work to see that the participants were properly certified by the Department of Employment Security. Only those people who had been unemployed for fifteen weeks and were within defined income categories could be certified. This provided a obstacle for many people who had hoped to participate and were in need of the program. Also many who were eligible had difficulty in dealing with the paper work and personnel at their local office of Employment Security. The staff members of the program made home visits to provide assistance and when necessary interfaced with the employees of the Department of Employment Security.

The participants receive a variety of supportive services including: child care at each site, transportation assistance of two dollars per class, counseling, and referral to other agencies.

Each class lasts two hours: the first hour is classroom instruction in preparation for the GED test, the second hour is cultural revitalization. The class begins with sign-in. The first hour is primarily devoted to

math and science. Everyone in the classes can read and write but approximately twenty percent are at a fourth grade level. These people will not be able to accomplish their GED in one year, but by the end of this program will have reached sixth grade level or better. The instruction on math had to begin with the basics, teaching adding, subtracting, and leading up through multiplication and division.

The second hour of class is devoted to cultural revitalization. The Cherokee language is taught with the students learning to speak and write their traditional tongue. In arts and crafts they have learned to make cornhusk dolls, pottery, beadwork, traditional clothing, and baskets. They have also had special studies in legends of the Cherokee nation and traditional herbal medicine.

In addition, twice a month each class has a session with an educational consultant who teaches positive reinforcement and goal setting. These sessions center on providing the participants with an increased sense of self-confidence and the ability to clearly define and act on their personal goals in life. In the first class people were requested to make a list of the good things about themselves. As a group they were introverted and did not respond openly in class. However, after several months of positive reinforcement they are now able to write at least ten good things about themselves and are no longer shy about speaking out in the classroom. They have also learned to set goals and accomplish them. These goals deal primarily with the classroom but also extend to their personal life.

The instructors in the program make home visits to all the participants. This makes for a more open atmosphere in the classroom and gives the instructors the opportunity to provide individual counseling.

At this point in the program (May, 1979) three participants had taken the GED tests and two have passed. By June 11, it is expected that twenty-four participants will have taken the test. However, the impact of the class is much broader than the number of people who successfully acquire their GED. This program has helped the entire community to realize its heritage. It provides the feeling that each person is a part of something, that each person has a tradition and heritage they can be proud of and can use as a source of identification. Before this, Native American people did not have any unifying social functions that provided a sense of community. The classes have served to unite several splinter groups, to overcome the personal and political divisions and let all the Native American people come together.

The staff of the Indian Council and the instructors are working in the community to assure that the benefits of the classroom extend beyond the end of this program. The arts and crafts materials manufactured in the classes are not for resale. However, it is hoped that the skills acquired in the classroom can be used as a source of income for those who wish to become crafts people. Organizational activities have begun to set up a Native American Arts and Crafts Co-op. This will serve as a commercial outlet for arts and crafts materials. The co-op will be a

collective group which will develop membership and provide marketing outlets. With assistance of the legal aide division of the Indian Council it will incorporate as a non-profit corporation. One outlet is already available and others have been contacted. The market area will include east Tennessee and the Smokey Mountain area. The co-op will also help to get people involved in craft fairs as an outlet for Native American arts and crafts. Thus, the participants in the classroom are benefiting in two ways: first, learning educational skills towards obtaining their GED and increased employment opportunity, and second, learning traditional skills which are a part of their heritage and a potential source of income.

A few case histories of the participants will illustrate the human benefits of the program. The first is an older handicapped man who lived in semi-isolation. He had very little purpose in life and was quite reclusive and withdrawn. He was referred to the program and with the help of the staff was able to get certified. Now he has become an active participant and works outside the classroom to gather raw materials for arts and crafts projects. Another man was extremely withdrawn at the beginning of the classes. With the benefits of the positive reinforcement program he has become a part of the group and provides assistance to other members of class in the arts and crafts projects. One woman in the class had not left her home for five years. With some staff assistance she was certified and has become involved in other community activities outside of the classroom. Other members of the class would not speak in the beginning but now everyone has overcome the problems of low self-esteem and all the participants contribute in the classroom.

For the first time the Native American population of east Tennessee has programs which are administered by a state wide Indian organization with staff which are Native American members of the community. For these reasons the people are able to get involved in the

programs in a way which has never been possible. They are benefiting by a greater sense of community, the increase in education, the arts and crafts skills, and the availability of jobs through the jobs program.

3. General Assistance

The Knoxville office of the Indian Council offers a wide variety of services other than the jobs program and the GED program. These include: Indian advocacy, food services, legal assistance, and social services counseling and referral. The Indian Council is the only statewide organization that represents Native Americans. It offers a place that people of Native American descent can turn. Because the Council has an all Indian Board of Directors and is staffed by people of Native American descent it is accessible to Indians in a way that no other government service organizations can ever accomplish. Indian peoples can go to the Indian Council and know that they will be dealing with someone who understands their lifestyle and tradition. The Indian Council stands for advocacy of the rights of any Indian person. This type of advocacy can and does take place at all levels of the governmental and institutional structure in the state. For example, a Native American working for the TVA came to the Knoxville office of the Indian Council because the TVA would not accept that he was an Indian.. They claimed new regulations forced them to reclassify him because he did not attend traditional Native American religious meetings. The Indian Council staff were able to intervene and provided legal assistance to assure that he could maintain his status as an Indian. In another example an Indian man hired as a security guard was fired after nineteen months of employment because he would not inform on union organizers. The Indian Council staff called the National Labor Relations Board in Atlanta and the HEW overseer of Indian programs. Legal counseling was acquired and a petition is now pending to have him returned to his job.

The Indian Council staff work with the Catholic Ladies of Charity to provide emergency food. They also provide assistance with obtaining food stamps, when necessary accompaning the client to the food stamp office and assisting in the completion of the paperwork.

In cases when legal assistance is needed the Indian Council has provided counseling and representation. This has often been the only legal representation that the Native American clients have been able to acquire.

Social services counseling and referral is provided in health, housing, and other human services. In general, the Indian Council staff try to provide services for the Native Americans who request or are in need of assistance. For example, the home of one of the members of the GED program recently burned down. The Indian Council helped them with emergency food and housing. They also helped the people acquire the basic essentials to establish a new household. In another case, an Indian woman who was pregnant, couldn't work and had dropped out

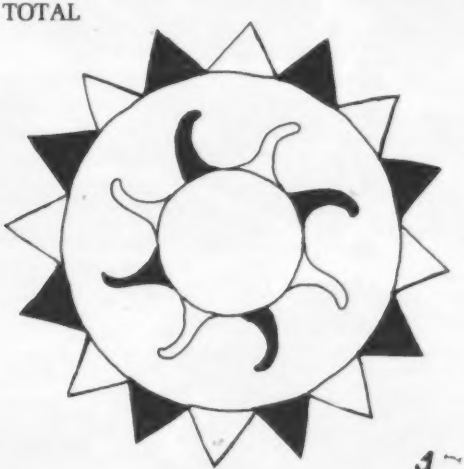
of school was provided health counseling. She had no family support and received counseling with personal problems. She is currently enrolled in the GED program. Another man was provided assistance in gaining entrance to the U.S. Armed Services. He was enrolled in radar studies and provided transportation assistance. When he had a service related disability, the Council represented him and he got ten percent disability for life. They also helped him enroll at U.T. and V.A. benefits. In a final example a woman was put to work on the job program. She had family problems and was forced to move. The Council helped her with housing, provided counseling, food stamp assistance and legal services. She was placed in another job and helped with educational services for her children.

In conclusion, the Knoxville office of the Indian Council has provided services that were previously not available to the Native American community. The numerial summary of the services provided by the Knoxville office are as follows:

TABLE V

EAST TENNESSEE PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Services	Number Served
Work Experience Job	64
Public Service Employment Job	5
VISTA Employment	5
Classroom Training	5
GED Program	50
GED Waiting List	22
Advocacy and Social Services	121
TOTAL	272



A Mohawk family in Tennessee.

Typical rural Indian homes in East Tennessee.

V. CONCLUSION

The Tennessee Indian Council has become the focal point of attention for the Native American population of the state. For the first time the more than eight thousand people of Native American descent in Tennessee have a state wide organization which is striving to identify and meet their needs. Further, the Council has moved to educate the various institutions of the state concerning the fact that there is a sizable population of Native Americans in the state. Before the advent of the Council the state service agencies and the population in general had little or no comprehensive or awareness concerning the Native American population. It was generally assumed that because there are no reservations in the state any Indian residents must be integrated into the larger structure of the society. Since the Council began operations it has demonstrated that although the Native American population is not statistically very large there are several Native American communities around the state. Being of Indian heritage carries a special meaning. The Native American people are distinct from the white, black, and other ethnic cultures. They have their own traditions, language, medicine, religious awareness, and economic structure. This tie to the past makes it difficult if not impossible to simply integrate into the society at large.

The situation in Tennessee is a microcosm of Indian world all over the United States. The rural communities in east and west Tennessee face the same problems and must deal with circumstances similar to the rural life on most reservations. They experience the same poverty, lack of education, and lack of job skills evident in most Indian communities. The urban Indians also face the problems of urban Indians everywhere, the alienation, alcoholism and difficulties with jobs and housing.

The Council has struggled to speak out for the Native American population. The Council is the only state wide advocate for Indians and Indian programs. The Council stands for the rights of all the people of Native American descent and seeks to restore a measure of sovereignty. The Council operates on the principal of self-determination. That is, the Council does not initiate action, rather it responds to the needs of the people as they state them.

The way has not been smooth for the Council. The Council has had to struggle to establish and maintain programs for Indians. The Council has fought stiff opposition, often based in racial prejudice, to acquire state funds to administer Indian programs. But, most importantly, the Council has survived the roadblocks, the frustration, and the problems to administer programs to meet the needs of the Native Americans.

With the money the Council has operated a state wide job program to provide work for any Native American who is CETA eligible. The Council has also operated educational programs designed to meet the special needs and circumstances of the Indian populations in east and west Tennessee. In addition to these programs the staff has provided extensive counseling and referral to Native American individuals in all parts of the state.

In the three years it has been in existence the Council has survived to become established in the eyes of the Native American people and in the state institutional structure. Now that the Council is established it can begin to look ahead and plan for the future. The basic goals for the future include the continuation of the present services and the addition of new programs. The Council wants to see the advent of a bilingual educational program for the Choctaw speaking children in the Lauderdale Public School system. The Council would like to establish a library to serve as a clearing house for historical and contemporary information concerning Indians of Tennessee and the southeast. The Council intends to continue in the direction of community development particularly in the areas of employment, training, housing, health, education and cultural revitalization. The Council also wants to continue working to eradicate the stereotypes that are still prevalent, particularly in the educational system.

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